

ALEXANDRA CROSBY

## Gang re:Publik, Indonesia-Australia creative adventures

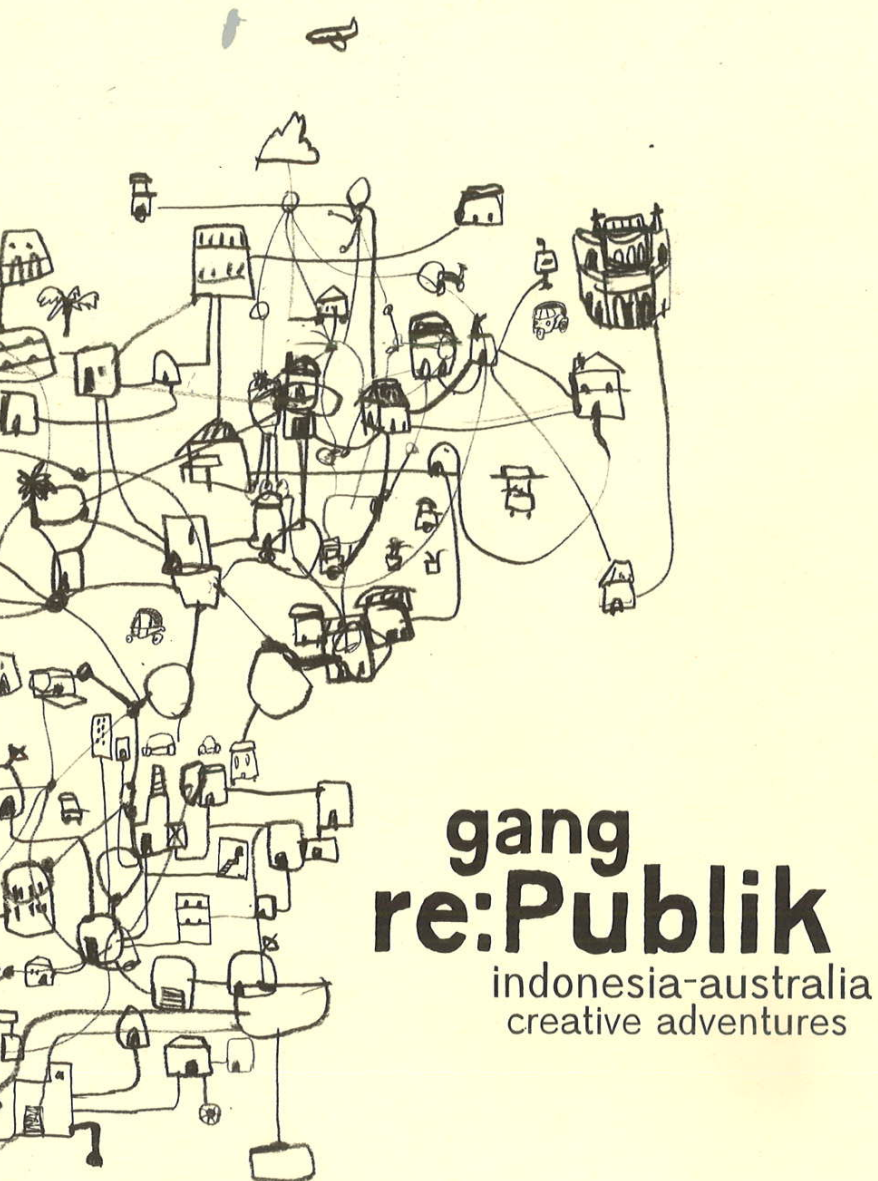
2008 | *Gang Inc., Sydney*

Gang re:Publik is a collection of original creative writings and images focusing on exchange and collaboration between Indonesia and Australia. The research for this book was undertaken during the Gang Festival, an artist-led initiative celebrating the deep links between Indonesian and Australian community arts.

I edited and art directed the book, wrote an essay on the Jakarta artist group ruangrupa, conducted a series of interviews and contributed photographs.

Gang Festival took as its theme the Indonesian word for alleyway. It straddled a dual reference to small roads and particular social groupings; referring to the space between more permanent and conventional roads and roles. In Indonesian communities, 'gang', forms a critical artery in Kampung (neighbourhood) culture, where local trade and communities thrive in close proximity to one another. Gangs also evoke images of crevices, margins, and a rich density of peripheral culture. Gang Festival formed part of my PhD field work on cross-cultural collaboration between artists and designers who situate their work on the margins of commercial creative practice in Australia and Indonesia.

*Gang re:Publik, Indonesia-Australia creative adventures, book cover*



Edited by

Alexandra Crosby, Rebecca Conroy, Suzan Piper & Jan Cornall

Alexandra Crosby

## We love spontan: Reflecting on the collaborations of Gang Festival 2006

The first Gang Festival in 2006 was an ambitious adventure involving over fifteen artist-run spaces. We worked together in ways that were often spontaneous and intangible, in galleries, lounge rooms, streets, studios, and warehouses in Indonesia and Australia. In February 2006, still recovering from the *kampung* street festival, the gangart in the alleyways of Chippendale, and many trips to Sydney airport, seven artists reflected on the outcomes of the festival and described their approaches to collaboration.

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Ariani Darmawan

Festivals are usually assessed by their outcomes, or 'product', but the meaning of the term 'product' shifts over time. Right now I think good art produces good relationships, provocative networking, and a deeper understanding of other cultures, i.e. of other people. Art opens its door to be social commentary for all kinds of people. Art no longer separates the medium, the maker, the idea, and the audience – collectively they all envisage, and build the 'product'. Artists don't alter form, they change the way people look at it. I (truly, madly, deeply) think that Gang achieved its 'production of art' in that sense. It made me laugh, it made me sick, and it made me cry.

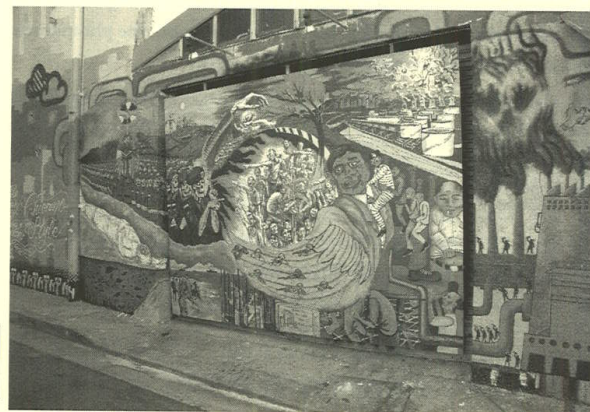
There are artists who live communally in Sydney, but most of them work individually. It's the other way around in Bandung, where I live. But I see the same spirit. There are small torches, lighting the cul-de-sacs. Yes, I think it's the cul-de-sacs that we give light to. It will always be. And the reason is obvious, that main roads already have their lighting.

Now at least next time I visit Sydney I don't have to worry about accommodation. And that applies to all the Gang artists too when they visit us. So, there is an

equation, good relationships = low budget = efficiency = more fun. I guess in that way, Gang was about new outcomes. There are some still missing links, but we'll fix them in our next collaboration, because the easiest way to make anything happen is to gather round two or more dirty artists in a dirty warehouse.

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May's Lane mural  
by Taring Padi  
Gang Festival 2006  
3 x 2.5 m



Aris Prabawa

Many collaborations were part of Gang. We (Taring Padi) worked at May's Lane on a hand painted mural. There were so many hands I can't count, both Australian and Indonesian. We worked with Mekanarki at Turrella. We worked with dancers and performers for the closing performance. And also we worked with the staff at Pine Street to make our exhibition.

I think everyone learned a lot. We would have liked a lot more time though, as we had so much to do. And we would like to work more with Indigenous artists in Australia. For Taring Padi members, it was a lot more rushed than our normal practice and we were working with more techniques than we had before, particularly with Mekanarki who work to very large scales with very advanced materials and technologies. Taring Padi doesn't limit what we do to one particular artistic medium, but we needed time to make the best of those opportunities.

Gang was kind of like the collective processes at Taring Padi in Yogyakarta, where anything is doable, and ideas and enthusiasm take precedence over resource constraints.



## Claire Conroy

I think spending time with someone is the very simple first step to collaboration and cultural exchange. Working with other people on a creative and culturally critical pursuit can challenge you and does require effort, but it is fun, and deeply resonant. The pinhole photograph 'spending time together, a three hour exposure' embodied this idea in an exchange with Jakarta artist Reza Afisina. Sitting still for three hours is painful and requires a lot of effort but the conversation, the photograph, and the experience shared are all worth it.

The collaborative experience had many outcomes. I haven't done any endurance work before. This influence came from Reza's practice. The material outcome of pinhole photography is from my practice, so this work was a unique collaboration. Working with Reza on 'spending time together...' did renew optimism about working with other artists. The Gang Festival also opened up the creative possibilities of working with a team to achieve a large-scale creative goal that benefits many people. It was particularly rewarding to make this happen outside the regular models of employment and institutions.

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## Hosanna Heinrich

As a side project of the festival, I made a still life/video collaboration with three other women, Ariani (Rani) from Indonesia, Fieke from Holland, and Malenie from France. We jokingly called it 'cross breeding the dirty artist'. The idea arose during a casual *nongkrong* (hanging out) session at Giulia, a local café in Chippendale, play-fighting over breakfast. After further developments it looked like this: four women of different cultural backgrounds are seated at a table laid with a lavish Dutch still life. Their attempts to communicate, each in their own language, escalate into violence before they resume their original positions.

The experience of improvisation with four very different women can be likened to the broader processes of working across cultural differences. We put ourselves in an intuitive performance situation, without a common language. There were awesome and unexpected results.

This was my first video work. My main practice involves painting and drawing. Rani is a video artist which was an advantage. The main differences I encountered with Rani were perhaps more on a personal organisational level than cultural. Rani is an extremely organised producer. Where I would lean towards physically workshopping a performance from the outset, Rani preferred to sit in a clear space and discuss ideas, to conceptualise the piece first and realise it with the support of lists, clocks and timetables. A beautiful intersection occurred.

I feel inspired by many of the collaborations that occurred during the Gang Festival, and particularly by this one. It is very likely that our exchange will continue with the help of our trusty computers. A collective adventure is one have been actively seeking and is sometimes sadly lacking in the general artistic ambience of Sydney. The collision of minds, especially across cultures is guaranteed to yield original and unexpected results.

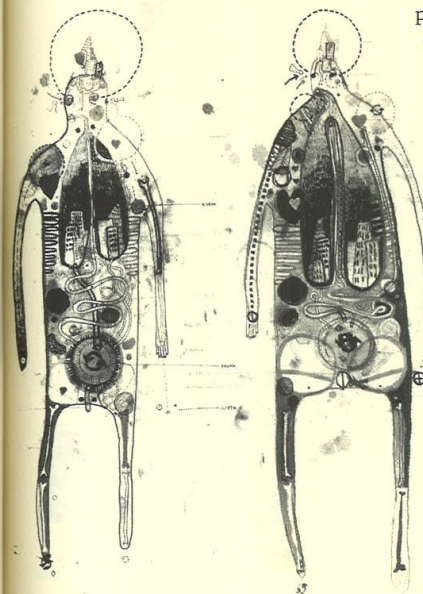
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## James Hancock

Travelling in Indonesia, I learned a lot about working together across mediums because basically there are a lot of things you can't do solo. Music video makers, filmmakers, musicians, designers, artists, curators and writers hang out together and support each other to create independent projects and economies.

While Reza Afisina was in Sydney for Gang, we made a video together called 'nongkrong'. We wanted to explore and document the idea of 'hanging out.' We stood in front of a chalk board and presented ideas in drawings, the final piece involved speeding up parts and overlaying different pieces of our conversation with different times of the visual, so the presentation became chaotic and layered.

It largely came out of showing Reza my city and him responding to things we saw as we worked together setting up shows, minding galleries, and delivering equipment. He responded to different signs to me but I found he had a similar comic/conceptual/re-interpretive process of looking at the world and playing with words and conversation. The video was successful in documenting a part of our experience, but as two artists, we really needed more devoted time together, more hanging out. The whole experience of working across cultural differences was amazing though. There were moments where I was so proud of what I was doing, utilising the networks and space I had access to in Australia in order to facilitate the exchange and creation of ideas with an international artist

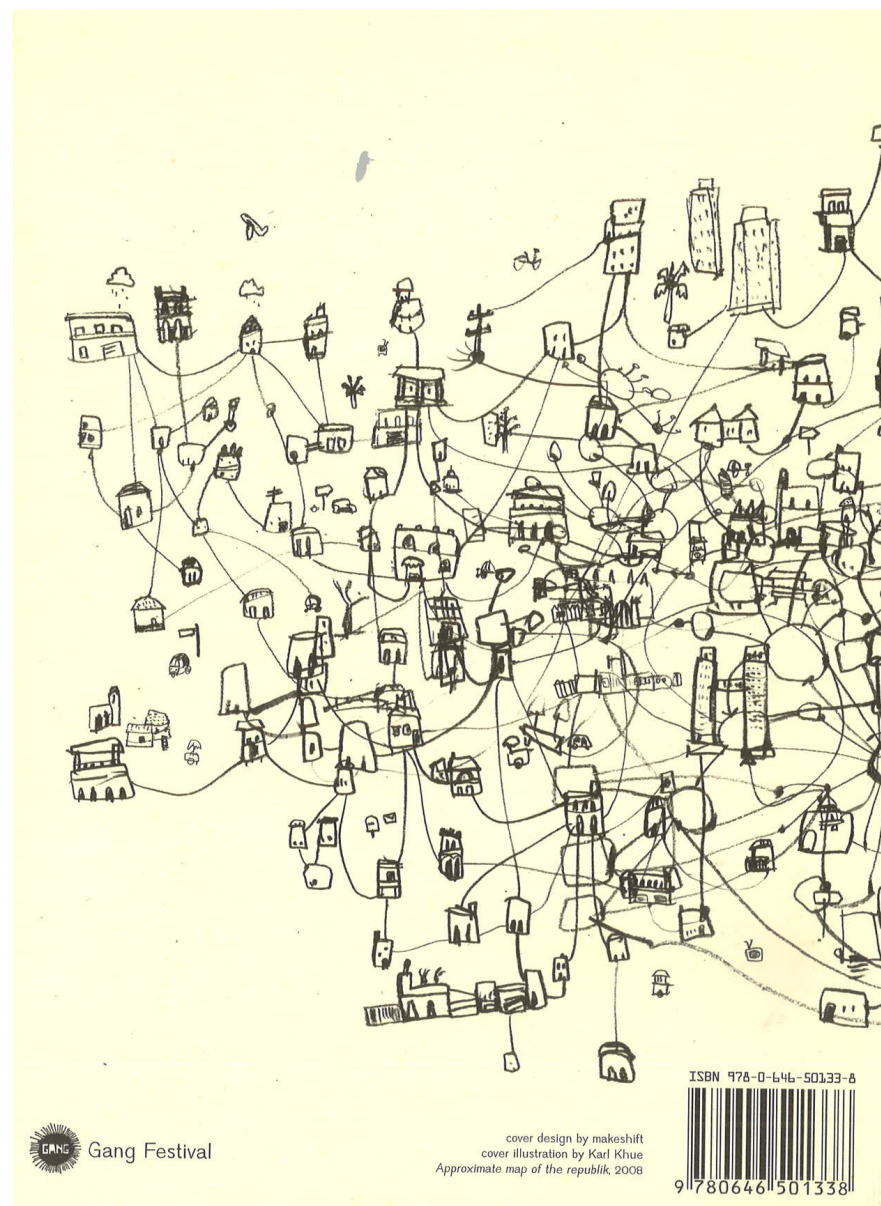
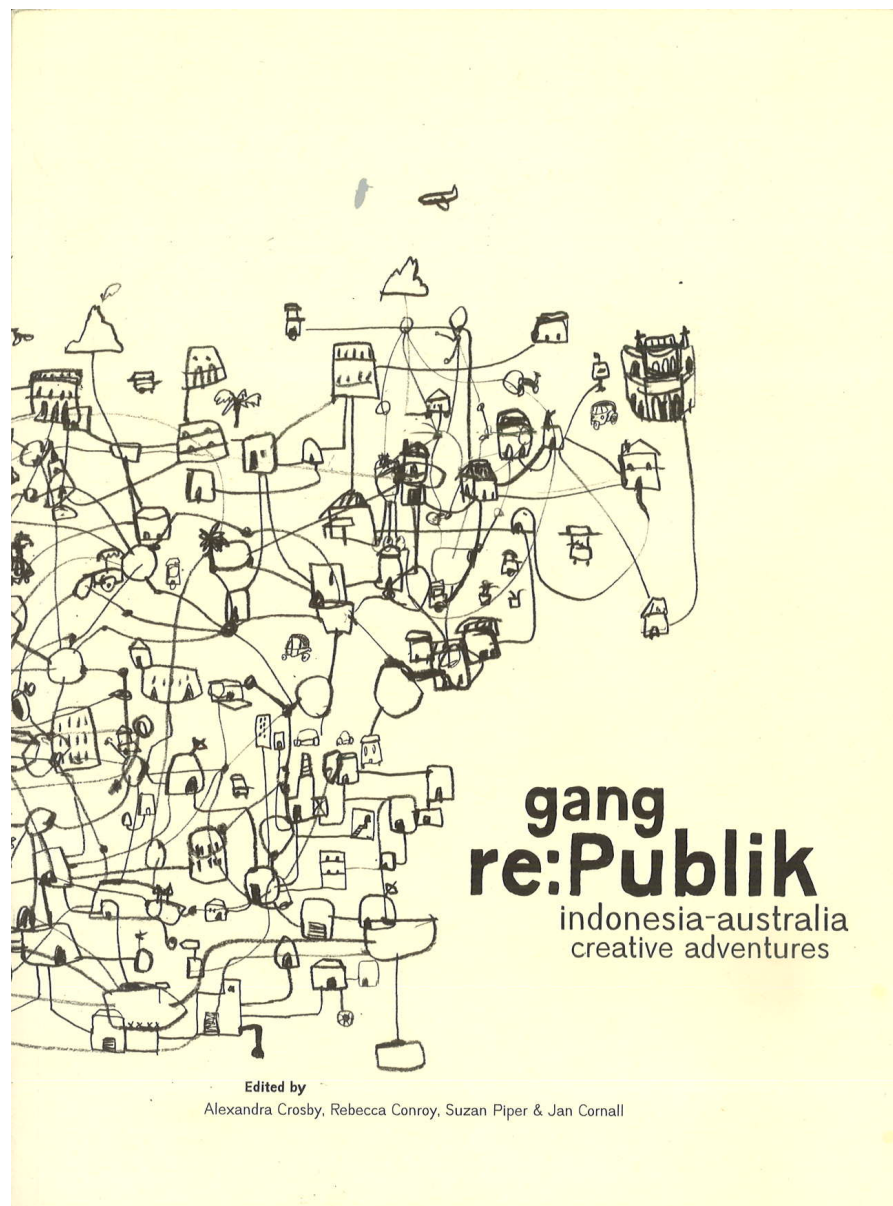


James Hancock  
Drawings from Indonesian residency  
Charcoal, ink, coffee, pencil on paper



ALEXANDRA CROSBY  
Gang re:Publik, Indonesia-  
Australia creative adventures

*Gang re:Publik, Indonesia-Australia  
creative adventures, front and back  
book cover*





project – *Mum and Her Bastard Sons*; and with performance artists in their annual festival, *Perfurbance*. At Gang Festival 2008 Jan embarked on a new project with short story writer Triyanto Triwikromo, writing for a collection of cross cultural, bilingual Oz/Indo stories. Jan is currently working with Indonesian artist Jumaadi and musicians Deva Permana and Wendy Anggerani on a performance of *Take Me To Paradise* for OzAsia Festival, Adelaide 2008.

**Sunanda Creagh** is a ghost hunter. She lived in a haunted Javanese *kos* in Yogyakarta in 2002, where she spotted several statues moving in the middle of the night and was awoken on many occasions by the sound of phantom gamelan. She speaks *Bahasa Indonesia* and *Bahasa Hantu* fluently. By night, she runs a tattoo parlour for ghosts, *jinn*s and *dukuns*. By day, she is a journalist with the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

**Alexandra Crosby** is a member of Taring Padi, anakseribupulau, and TUK. She recently curated the exhibition 'Sisa: re-use, collaboration and cultural activism from Indonesia'. Alexandra was co-director of the Gang Festival in 2005 and 2008. She then attempted to move on to other things but Rebecca wouldn't accept her resignation. She is currently completing a PhD researching the visual culture of activists in Java.

**Wulan Dirgantoro** is a PhD candidate at the School of Asian Languages and Studies at the University of Tasmania. She contributes to various art journals in Indonesia and Australia, co-wrote *Indonesian Women Artists: The Journey Continues* with Carla Bianpoen and Farah Wardani (YSRI, Jakarta 2007) and curated 'Intimate distance' at the National Gallery of Indonesia in

Jakarta 2007. Her PhD project is on the representation of the body in the works of Indonesian women artists post-1990s.

**Djuadi** was born and grew up in Randublatung, a small village close to the border between Central Java and East Java. He has been interested in art since he was a young boy learning woodcarving. After he graduated from technical high school, he went to Jakarta to get a job. He worked as a builder, an illegal parking man, assistant carpenter, vegetable-seller in a traditional market, and in building maintenance. Djuadi became interested in the political movement in 1996 and joined together with the pro-democracy movement until Soeharto fell in May 1998. Since then, he has been involved in the local environment movement in Randublatung as well as other cultural activist groups such as Taring Padi, Teater Buruh Indonesia, TUK and anakseribupulau. In 2007, he spent three months in Australia as part of Gang Festival. He now lives in either Yogyakarta or Randublatung.

**Jade Dewi Tyas Tunggal** is an Australian Javanese choreographer and dance artist. She has performed in and created works with multi-contextual performing arts companies, independent choreographers and directors in Australia, United States of America, Indonesia and New Zealand. After secondary school at Newtown High School of the Performing Arts in Sydney, she continued her studies with a four year scholarship at the New World School of the Arts in Miami USA, where she was privileged to study and perform at several prestigious dance festivals, including WinterADF, Bates and Jacobs Pillow whilst gaining her Bachelor of Fine Arts Honours in

Dance from the University of Florida. In 2003/04 she studied traditional Indonesian dance at the University of the Arts in Yogyakarta, and her collaborative multi-modal dance work was presented by several festivals in Indonesia. In 2006 Jade Dewi was awarded a danceWEB Europe scholarship engagement at ImpulsTanz in Vienna and she recently completed her Masters of Choreography at the Victorian College of the Arts and Melbourne University.

**Kath Ellis** has worked as a community artist for over ten years. She has worked on many festivals including Woodford festival, Newtown festival, Peats Ridge festival, Gang festival and Smart Arts. She is a maker of big things usually made of bamboo, but some times a diverse set of materials. She is a facilitator, designer, conceptualiser, maker, and performer.

**Exi Agus Wijaya** was born in Randublatung in Central Java. He is a founding member of the collective anakseribupulau, a community of artists/activists that emerged from creative collaborations working against corruption and the destruction of the environment spread across Indonesia. He is also active with the cultural agitators Taring Padi, based in Yogyakarta and a member of the radical folk band Dendang Kampungan. Exi is a writer, musician, performance artist, and story teller. In 2008, Exi spent three months in Australia as part of Gang Festival.

**Robyn Fallick** first went to Indonesia when she was seventeen. Inspired by this, she went on to do a degree in Indonesian at the University of Sydney. She has lived, worked and studied in Indonesia. Currently, she is at SBS

TV and working on a book about her experiences in the town of Yogyakarta

**Rebecca Henschke** was born in Sydney, Australia. Rebecca fell in love with radio journalism when she was just nine years old. Her brother and sister were her co-hosts in DIY radio shows. She now works as the Editor of Asia Calling, a regional current affairs program from Indonesia's largest independent news agency Radio 68H in Utan Kayu, Jakarta. On top of that, she is an Indonesian correspondent for the BBC World Service, Public Radio International in America and SBS back home. Right now, she is passionate about reporting on environmental stories and the food and energy crisis across Asia. When not working she is dancing, traveling and exploring Jakarta after midnight.

**Sam Icklow** is an emerging filmmaker and video artist currently living in Sydney. When not busy emerging, he enjoys to travel. In 2006 he spent a year studying fine art in Indonesia, living with communities in Java, Sumatra and Sulawesi. Most recently he returned from living the gay dream in San Francisco, where his film screened at the Frameline International LGBT Film Festival.

**Sue Ingham** obtained her PhD at the University of NSW, College of Fine Arts, following a career teaching the history and theory of art in TAFE schools of fine arts. Her research, crossing disciplines from the visual arts to the social and political history of Indonesia, focuses on the development of an alternative visual arts and infrastructure in Indonesia in the 1990s. She has contributed to Australian and Asian publications concerning art and culture.

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**Gang re:Publik, Indonesia-Australia creative adventures**

*Gang re:Publik, Indonesia-Australia creative adventures, contributors*







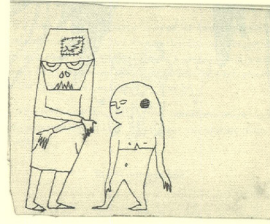
## ALEXANDRA CROSBY


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Supporting evidence

NEW ANTHOLOGY - gang re:Publik Indonesia (a Gang Festival publication), Asian Australian Studies News,  
<http://asianozstudiesnews.blogspot.com.au/2009/01/new-anthology-gang-republik-indonesia.html>

<p>gang re:Publik indonesia-australia creative adventures</p> <p>Edited by Alexandra Crosby, Rebecca Conroy, Susan Piper, Jan Cornell Translation by Susan Piper - <a href="http://www.wotcrossculture.com.au">www.wotcrossculture.com.au</a> Additional copy editing by Sam Icklow and Tessa Zettel Published in 2008 by Gang Festival Inc.</p> <p>Gang Festival PO Box 368 Newtown, 2042 NSW, Australia <a href="http://thegangfestival.com">thegangfestival.com</a> <a href="http://www.gangfestival.com">www.gangfestival.com</a></p> <p>Designed by makeShift - <a href="http://www.makeshift.com.au">www.makeshift.com.au</a> Cover illustration by Karl Khue - <i>Approximate map of the republik</i>, 2008</p> <p>© 2008. This book is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-Share Alike 2.5 Australia License. <a href="http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/au/">http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/au/</a> except: Emma Baalch. Edited excerpts from the introduction to <i>Making Scenes</i>, pp. 1-15. © 2007, Duke University Press / All rights reserved. Used by permission of the publisher. This is for print only.</p> <p>National Library of Australia Cataloguing in Publication entry Gang republik : Indonesia-Australia creative adventures editor, Jan Cornell ... [et al.] 1st ed. Includes index. ISBN 9 78064650 133 8 (pbk.) Arts - Indonesia. Arts - Australia. Cultural fusion and the arts. 700</p> <p>Printed in Australia by Ligare on Freelite 40% recycled FSC certified paper using vegetable-soy based ink Typeset in Absent grotesque, Chaparral Pro, Museo, Museo Sans, Univers, Delicious and Fontin</p> <p>Gang Festival is supported by   The VISUAL ARTS AND CRAFT STRATEGY</p> <p>Gang Festival is assisted by the NSW Government through Arts NSW</p> <p>This project has been funded by the City of Sydney</p> <p><b>arts nsw</b>  <b>CITY OF SYDNEY</b> </p>	<h2>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</h2> <p>The editors would like to thank all the contributors who gave their stories to this anthology. Special thanks also go to Sam Icklow for his unwavering support and contributions to the editing process and to Yonessa Hyde for her invaluable assistance from Indonesia. Gang Festival and all its associated projects would never have been possible without the dedicated work of hundreds of volunteers in Australia and Indonesia. Thanks also go to Bill + George Creative Studios for providing us with artist-run space.</p> <p>Thank you to <i>Inside Indonesia, Suara Merdeka</i>, Duke University Press, and KBR68H for allowing republication and/or translation of previously published work.</p> <p>The views expressed in this book do not reflect or necessarily represent those of Gang Inc. or the editors. Gang Inc. makes no representation concerning and does not guarantee the source, originality, accuracy, completeness or reliability of any statement, information, interpretation, or view presented.</p>  <p>Previous page Irennius Pungky From the series <i>Out-Of-Order</i>. Surabaya, Yogyakarta, 2006-2007 94 ballpoint drawings on cardboard</p> <p>Next page Acong and Jade Borneo-some</p>
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<h2>IMAGE CREDITS</h2> <p>Page 2, drawing by Irennius Pungky; page 5, drawing by Acongonyen; page 6, drawing by Acong and Jade; page 7, drawing by Karl Khue; pages 8-9, Kampung Festival Day signage by Mickie Quick and volunteers, image courtesy of Gang Festival. / <i>If I'm not mistaken, it is 'Soybean cake'</i>: pages 21-26, 23, all drawings by Tessa Zettel. <i>Arek Malang Must Be Happy</i>: page 32, photograph by Alexandra Crosby. <i>The Sweetness and Bitterness of Working in Cross Mediums, Cross-Culturally and in Different Places</i>: page 37, image courtesy of Jumaadi. <i>Dua-duanya - Tri &amp; Jan</i>: page 38, image courtesy of Jan Cornell. <i>On the bus</i>: page 46, image courtesy of Dodi Irvandi. <i>The Tropical Adventures of Kath Ellis</i>: page 50, photograph by Alexandra Crosby. <i>We love spontan</i>: page 55, photograph by Alexandra Crosby; page 57, image courtesy of James Hancock; page 58, photograph by Alexandra Crosby; page 59, photo by Claire Conroy. <i>Dua-duanya - Ella &amp; Aris</i>: page 60, photograph by Alexandra Crosby. <i>Dua-duanya - Ali &amp; Iani</i>: page 68, photograph by Alexandra Crosby. <i>Dua-duanya - Jabo &amp; Sue</i>: page 83, image courtesy of Susan Piper. <i>Dua-duanya - Rudy &amp; Ness</i>: page 93, image courtesy of Rudy &amp; Ness. <i>Dua-duanya - Carli &amp; Rani</i>: page 116, image courtesy of Alex Davies. <i>Dua-duanya - And &amp; Andan</i>: page 135, image courtesy of Andrew Lowenthal. <i>Dua-duanya - Heidi &amp; Emira</i>: page 143, image courtesy of Heidi Arbuckle. <i>Setulegi goes Airbus</i>: page 155, all images courtesy of the artist. <i>'Sisa' - Under the radar: thoughts on Indonesian exhibition strategies</i>: page 156, image courtesy of S. Teddy D; page 157, image courtesy of Deni Pancatriatna; page 159, image courtesy of Tanam Untuk Kehidupan; page 160, image courtesy of Aris Prabawa. <i>playing with refus(e)al</i>: page 162, image courtesy of Duto Hardono; page 163, image courtesy of anakseribupulau; page 165, image courtesy of A A o Season. <i>Dua-duanya - Ali &amp; Bek</i>: page 177, photograph by Sam Icklow. <i>Utterings</i>: page 186, drawing by Surya Wirawan; pages 184-185, images courtesy of Rebecca Conroy. <i>Dua-duanya - Djuadi &amp; Exi</i>: page 198, image courtesy of Djuadi &amp; Exi Wijaya. <i>Postcards from a wasteland</i>: page 202, <i>A serene stillness</i>, photograph by Jumaadi/Siobhan Campbell. <i>Bio-fuel in Central Kalimantan</i>: pages 205, 207, all photographs by Rebecca Henschke. <i>Life, Meat and Death</i>: pages 212-213, 215-217, all photographs from the collection of Tjitske Alida Verwey. / Pages 222-223, 232-240, images of Gangart exhibition, Kampung Festival Day, Chippendale, 2006, all photographs by Emma Lees, courtesy of the artists; page 231, photograph by Alexandra Crosby; page 240 (right), May's Lane mural by Taring Padi,</p>	
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